RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE FROM VIENNA ON VIEW AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Title: Renaissance Master Bronzes from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

WASHINGTON -- The finest collection of 16th century bronze sculpture ever to leave Europe will go on view at the National Gallery of Art, East Building Mezzanine, Aug. 17 through Nov. 30, 1986. Renaissance Master Bronzes from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna brings together objects from one of Europe's most renowned museums. The exhibition will highlight a medium in which major masters of Western sculpture have worked for centuries.

J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art, said: "The 75 sculptures in this exhibition are from one of the greatest collections of Renaissance bronzes in the world. While the exhibition does present objects of rare beauty, their subject matter and collecting history also provide fascinating glimpses into European culture during the transition from medieval to modern society."

Most of the works in this exhibition were originally produced in Italy and were collected by members of the royal houses of Austria and the Holy Roman Empire over a period of more than 400 years. In some cases, objects can actually be traced back to their 16th century Italian owners.

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These small, durable sculptures were created partly to emulate the ancient bronzes which were being found in increasing numbers in Italy during the 15th and 16th centuries. Available to anyone who could afford them, they were favored by well-educated collectors, whether they were members of the nobility, merchants, clerics or humanist scholars.

Inkwells and Ancient Heroes

Primarily secular and domestic in nature, the bronzes were particularly popular for display in the home. Some were utilitarian objects, such as inkwells, lamps or containers for blotting sand, but most were valued simply as fine artistic renditions of ancient heroes, myths and aspects of nature, to admire and display to one's cultivated guests. Possession of these objects demonstrated their owners' literary culture and sense of connection to the world of classical antiquity.

A sculptor of particular interest is Bertoldo di Giovanni, who modeled and signed the Bellerophon and Pegasus (his colleague Adriano Fiorentino cast it, as the inscription also indicates). An assistant to the great 15th century Florentine master Donatello, Bertoldo in his later years was a close friend of Lorenzo de' Medici, known as il Magnifico. According to a somewhat controversial tradition, Bertoldo was Michelangelo's teacher in sculpture.
Bronze Satyrs

One of the most frequent subjects for small bronzes was the satyr. These mythical creatures, half-man and half-goat, were represented as beings driven by sensual impulses, symbolizing the vital, generative force of nature. They were particularly popular as art objects in the city of Padua, a northeast Italian university town which was then a major center of bronze production. The Paduan sculptor Andrea Briosco, known as Riccio, was one of the leading bronze makers of the Renaissance and one of the most intensely individual artists represented in the show. The highly expressive character of his work is most evident in the Seated Satyr Drinking, a vibrant, impressionistic treatment of the popular satyr theme. The earliest known Renaissance bronze satyr statuette, a signed work by Adriano Fiorentine (known active until 1499), is also in the exhibition.

As the seat of one of the oldest universities in the world, Padua was also a center for scientific study of the natural world. The large number of casts of animals made from life which emerged from this period, including the Crab and Toad in the exhibition, are thought to have been produced in the city's many small workshops. Such sculptures probably adorned desks and shelves in the studies of scholars, as admired curiosities which occasionally served utilitarian purposes.

Renaissance Thought and Ancient Sculpture

The Renaissance artist who signed himself Moderno is responsible for two magnificent gilded silver reliefs in the exhibition, The Flagellation of Christ and Madonna and Child with Saints. Among the relatively few religious works in the show, they reflect a striving to harmonize classical and Christian philosophy in a way characteristic of Renaissance thought.

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Just as Modermo modeled the Christ of his Flagellation relief on the famous Hellenistic marble sculpture of the Laocoon, excavated in Rome in 1506, so also Pier Jacopo Alari-Buonacolsi, known as Antico, frequently based his exquisitely finished bronzes on well-known works of ancient sculpture. His classically proportioned, idealized figures were often enhanced by gilding and silvering (as on the Venus Felix in the exhibition) and in some instances, as with the wrestling Hercules and Antaeus, are attempts to reconstruct an ancient work he had seen only in a fragmentary state.

Among later 16th century bronzes are some particularly moving Venetian works such as Alessandro Vittoria's Winter. Here a gaunt, aged man stands bundled in fur-trimmed robes, a striking contrast to the many youthful, heroic nudes in the exhibition. Another Venetian work is Niccolo Roccatagliata's Adam and Eve, which, while sketchy in its modeling of the figures, nevertheless presents a strongly expressive portrayal of the subjects' despair.

Works Inspired by Michelangelo

Giambologna (Giovanni da Bologna) was a brilliant Flemish sculptor who settled in Florence where he served the Medici court from c.1561 until his death in 1608. His beautifully finished bronzes, with their elegant, refined figures -- which were highly prized throughout Europe -- reflect the influence of Michelangelo and his Florentine followers. The exhibition features three bronzes by Giambologna, including the signed, gilded Venus Urania and the Flying Mercury, one of the artist's most popular inventions. A larger version of the Mercury, executed by a later artist, is familiar to the American public as the centerpiece of the fountain in the rotunda at the National Gallery of Art.
A 17th Century Venus

A work which contrasts sharply with Giambologna's deliberately attenuated, spiraling figure is the Netherlandish Venus (c.1640), one of the later works in the exhibition. Relaxed in pose, fuller in proportions and warmer in expression, she embodies the more natural ideal of beauty that developed in the 17th century after the rarified style of Giambologna's era.

The catalogue for the show, written by Manfred Leithe-Jasper, head of the sculpture and decorative arts departments at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, is a particularly attractive and valuable work. For people unfamiliar with Renaissance bronzes it contains a general introduction explaining the technical processes involved in producing the sculpture and discusses many of the ancient myths and legends represented by the works in the exhibition. For historians and specialists it includes provenances, bibliography and scholarly discussions of the most recent opinions on controversial problems.

The exhibition is being organized by Donald McClelland, Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), with Douglas Lewis and Alison Luchs, curator and assistant curator of sculpture at the National Gallery of Art (McClelland and Lewis have also contributed introductory essays to the catalogue). It is supported in Washington, D.C. by a generous contribution from Republic National Bank of New York and Banco Safra, S.A., Brazil.

After leaving the National Gallery, the exhibition will be on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Dec. 18, 1986 - Feb. 18, 1987; and the Art Institute of Chicago, March 15 - June 6, 1987.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Color transparencies and black & white photographs are available. Call Ellen Stanley, (202) 842-6360.
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National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C.

RENAISSANCE MASTER BRONZES FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, VIENNA

The exhibition will consist of seventy five bronzes selected by Dr. Manfred Leithe-Jasper, head of the department of sculpture and decorative arts, the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Dr. C. Douglas Lewis, curator of sculpture, National Gallery of Art and Donald R. McClelland, international exhibition coordinator, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

The following Master bronzes constitute the exhibition:

1. Antonio di Pietro Averlino called Filarete (c. 1400-1469)
   **Odysseus and Iryus**
   - Height: 27.5cm; Width: 16.4cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 6127

2. Bertoldo di Giovanni and Adriano Fiorentino (ca. 1420-1491)
   **Bellerophon Taming Pegasus**
   - Height: 32.5cm; Base: 24.9 x 10.8cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 5596

3. Adriano Fiorentino
   **Standing Satyr**
   - Height: 41.4cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 5851

4. North Italian (Padua or Mantua), ca. 1470-80
   **The Entombment of Christ**
   - Height: 24.4cm without the acroterion, which is 3cm high; Width: 44.9cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 6059

5. Tuscan, Francesco di Giorio?, last quarter of the fifteenth century
   **Virgin and Child with Three Angels**
   - Height: 34.2cm; Width: 21.9cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 9118

6. Florentine, last quarter of the fifteenth century
   **Putto Mictans**
   - Height: 44.2cm.
   - Inv. no. Pl. 9988
7. North Italian, ca. 1500  
   Jupiter  
   Height: 35cm.  
   Inv. no. Pl. 5769

8. Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi, called Antico (before 1460-1528)  
   Venus Felix  
   Height without base 29.8cm; Height of base 2.4cm.  
   Inv. no. Pl. 5726

9. Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi, called Antico  
   Hercules and Antaeus  
   Height without base 39.4cm; Height of base 3.8cm.  
   Inv. no. Pl. 5767

10. Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi, called Antico  
   Hercules and the Ceryneian Hind  
   Diameter 32.7cm.  
   Inv. no. Pl. 5993

11. North Italian (circle of Antico), ca. 1500  
    Standing Hercules  
    Height 33.4cm.  
    Inv. no. Pl. 10130

12. North Italian, ca. 1500  
    Venus (the Venus of Cardinal Granvella)  
    Height: 18.5cm.  
    Inv. no. Pl. 7343

13. North Italian, beginning of the sixteenth century  
    Seated Female Panther  
    Height: 29.5cm.  
    Inv. no. Pl. 7339

14. North Italian (probably Padua), ca. 1500  
    Ambling Horse  
    Height: 18.5cm.  
    Inv. no. Pl. 5703

15. North Italian (probably Padua), ca. 1500  
    Bull  
    Height 12.2cm.  
    Inv. no. Pl. 5704
16. North Italian (probably Padua), beginning of the sixteenth century
   Crab
   Width: 18.6cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5927

17. North Italian (Padua?), beginning of the sixteenth century
   Toad
   Height: 8.5cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5938

18. North Italian (Padua or Venice), first half of the sixteenth century
   Armored Horseman
   Height: 14.7cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 10010

19. North Italian (probably Padua or Venice), beginning of the sixteenth century
   Seated Bacchante with Wreath
   Height: 15.7cm
   Inv. no. Pl. 5529

20. Andrea Briosco, called Riccio (1470-1532)
    Seated Satyr
    Height: 21.7cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 5539

21. Andrea Briosco, called Riccio
    Boy with a Goose.
    Height: 19.6cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 5518

22. North Italian (Padua), first half of the sixteenth century
    Marsyas
    Height: 12.3cm
    Inv. no. Pl. 5628

23. North Italian, beginning of the sixteenth century
    Warrior
    Height: 28.8cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 5656

24. North Italian (Padua?), second quarter of the sixteenth century
    Pieta with Angels
    Height 21.3 cm; Width: 13.8cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 8895
25. Moderno
   Flagellation of Christ
   Height: 13.8cm; Width: 10.2cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 1105

26. Moderno
   Madonna and Child with Saints
   Height: 13.9cm; Width: 10.2cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 1107

27. North Italian (Padua), beginning of the sixteenth century,
    probably from a model by Giovanni Maria Mosca (active 1507-73)
   Artemis
   Height: 21.8cm; Width 11.8cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 9019

28. Antonio Lombardo (?)
   Head of a Girl
   Height: 17.3 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 9098

29. Venetian, first half of the sixteenth century, close to Simone
    Bianco
   Head of a Child
   Height: 15.5cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5597

30. Attributed to Simone Bianco
   Head of a Man
   Height: 17.4 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5615

31. North Italian, mid sixteenth century
   Bust of Alexander the Great
   Height: 32.7cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5603

32. Northern Italy or Nuremberg?, first third of the sixteenth century
   Stout Man
   Height: 17.3cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5528.

33. North Italian, end of the fifteenth century
   Venus
   Height: 23.1cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5600
34. North Italian, Padua or Venice, c. 1525
   *Dead Christ with an Angel*
   Height: 8.7 cm; Width: 8.5 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 7733

35. Italian?, second half of the sixteenth century
   *Negro Venus*
   Height including base: 32.5 cm; Height of base: 1.9 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5533

36. Florentine, mid sixteenth century
   *Hercules or Cain*
   Height: 30.8 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5658

37. Florentine, mid sixteenth century: Niccolo Tribolo?
   *Satyr Lamp*
   Height: 15.6 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5917

38. North Italian, second quarter of the sixteenth century
   *Pegasus*
   Height: 6.5 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5731

39. North Italian, first half of the sixteenth century
   *Crouching Gladiator I*
   Height: 17.3 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5583

40. Adriaen de Vries (c. 1545-1626)
   *Crouching Gladiator II*
   Height: 18.9 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5819

41. Milanese (?), end of the sixteenth century
   *Barbarian on Horseback*
   Height: 30.2 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5768

42. Attributed to Jacopo Sansovino (1486-1570)
   *Jupiter*
   Height: 43 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5655
43. Tiziano Minio (1511/12-1552)  
Neptune in His Chariot  
Height of Neptune alone: 30.1cm, with chariot: 34.5cm.  
Inv. nos. Pl. 5748 (Neptune) and 5911 (chariot)

44. Alessandro Vittoria (1525-1608)  
Allegory of Winter, or A Philosopher  
Height: 33.2cm including the integrally cast base.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5664

45. Venetian (?), Tiziano Aspetti (?) (ca. 1559-1606)  
Venus Marina  
Height: 55.5cm.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5885

46. Attributed to Nicolo Roccagagliata, documented between 1593-1636  
Adam and Eve  
Height: 23.2cm.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5530

47. Nicolo Roccagagliata, documented between 1593-1636  
Putto with Drum and Flute  
Height: 28.2cm including the integrally cast base-plate.  
Inv. no. Pl. E. 7579

48. Nicolo Roccagagliata, documented between 1593-1636  
Putto Playing the Flute  
Height: 28.6cm including the integrally cast base-plate.  
Inv. no. Pl. E. 7578

49. Johann Gregor van der Schardt ca. 1530, last mentioned in 1581  
Mercury  
Height: 53cm.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5900

50. Giambologna (1529-1608)  
Venus Urania  
Height: 38.8 cm.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5893

51. Giambologna (1529-1608)  
Flying Mercury  
Height: 62.7 cm.  
Inv. no. Pl. 5898
52. Antonio Susini after Giambologna, active from c. 1580, died 1624
The Centaur Nessus Abducting Deianira
Height: 42.4cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5847

53. Giambologna (1529-1608)
Allegory of Prince Francesco de' Medici
Height: 30.7cm; Width: 45.6cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5814

54. Adriaen de Vries (ca. 1545-1626)
Christ at the Column
Height: 86.5cm; to the top of Christ's head: 64.7.
Inv. no. Pl. 8908

55. Antonio Susini (?) after Giambologna, active from c. 1580, died 1624
Pacing Lion
Height without base: 13.5cm. Base: Height: 1.2cm; Length: 15.2cm; Width: 7.3cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5876

56. After Giambologna
Triton
Height: 44.8cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 9115

57. Florentine (?), first half of the seventeenth century
Crane
Height: 28.9cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5840

58. Antonio Susini (?) after Giambologna, active from c. 1580, died 1624
Lion Attacking a Bull
Height: 20.1cm; Width: 26.6cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5837

59. Close to Adriaen de Vries (ca. 1545-1626)
Putto Riding on a Dolphin
Height: 11.4cm; Length: 17.4 cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 9117

60. Attributed to Pietro Francavilla (1548-1615)
Chronos-Saturn
Height: 24.1cm.
Inv. no. Pl. 5888.
61. French (?), second half of the 16th century
   Greyhound
   Height, including socle: 18cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 9992

62. Italian, second half of the sixteenth century
   Elephant
   Height: 12.6 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5721

63. North Italian, sixteenth century
   Standing Putto
   Height: 21.2 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5882

64. Italian Milanese (?), second half of the 16th century
   Pacing Horse
   Height: 31.9 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5772

65. Florentine (?), mid-seventeenth century
   Archduke Leopold Wilhelm on Horseback
   Height: 38.7 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 6002

66a. Attributed to Caspar Gras, ca. 1585-1674
    The Emperor Ferdinand III on Horseback
    Height: 36.2 cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 6020

66b. Attributed to Caspar Gras, ca. 1585-1674
    Spare Head, probably of the archduke Ferdinand Charles or Sigismund Francis
    Height: 6.9 cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 6753

67. Caspar Gras (?), ca. 1585-1674
    Mercury and Psyche
    Height: 38.6 cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 5859

68. Florentine, end of the sixteenth century
    Bird (warbler)
    Height: 5.9 cm.
    Inv. no. Pl. 5756
69. Attributed to Caspar Gras, ca. 1585-1674
   Nereid
   Height: 10.2 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5669

70. Florentine (?), second half of the 16th century
   Triton with a Fish
   Height: 14.6 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 9122

71. Attributed to Hubert Gerhard, ca. 1550-1622/23
   Two Horses Playing
   Height: 38.2 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 6005

72. Hubert Gerhard, ca. 1550-1622/23
   Mars, Venus and Cupid
   Height: 41.4 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5848

73. South German (?), beginning of the seventeenth century
   River God
   Height: 24 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5890.

74. South German or Venetian; end of the 17th century, after a South
   German prototype perhaps by Georg Petel
   St. Jerome
   Height 25.9 cm. to the top of the cross; 24.6 cm to the saint's
   head.
   Inv. no. Pl. E. 7561

75. Netherlandish, circa 1640 (perhaps Jerome Dugueshoy 1602-1654)
   Venus or Amphitrite
   Height: 49.2 cm.
   Inv. no. Pl. 5850